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ABSTRACT

By completing these activities, secondary students will learn about the concepts of specialization, comparative advantage, and interdependence as they pertain to their own lives, the lives of Arkansans, the lives of Americans, and the lives of people in other nations. Some examples of the activities follow. Students take inventory of foreign made products in their homes. To determine the role of Arkansas in world agricultural trade, they analyze statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. (Statistics are provided for all activities which ask students to analyze data.) In another activity, students contact several industrial facilities to ask them for a list of the nations to which they ship their finished products; then they map the flow of these resources and products. Students also conduct local surveys, do library research, analyze agricultural import data, and view television newscasts and read newspapers to determine how the media report information about other nations. (RM)

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ARKANSANS, ARKANSAS, AND THE WORLD

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During my first two years in Arkansas several social studies teachers told me about a textbook that was formerly used for teaching about Arkansas. The text stated that a wall could be built around the state of Arkansas and that the state would function quite well without dealing with any other state or nation. Each of the teachers went on to express the personal displeasure with the inaccuracy of that old textbook's statement and to express his/her own opinion that Arkansas students needed to know more about the world outside of Arkansas.

It is a fact of life in the technological world that individuals daily use many products and technologies which they can not make or repair. Educated people appear to learn more and more about less and less. The key to understanding the implications of these truths and the ability to solve problems related to the truths is the ability to recognize examples of and to define three concepts: 1.specialization, 2. comparative advantage, and 3. interdependence.

Specialization is an efficient development of abllities to perform a part of the whole task. Those who specialize develop a comparative advantage in that they can produce a product part or perform a service using less time and /or fewer productive resources than can the nonspecialist. Specialization helps a society to overcome problems of scarcity. However, the individual whose work is specialized has multiple needs which he/she can not fulfill while working at a specialized job. The solution to fulfilling personal needs and some wants comes about through the trading or purchasing of the goods and services produced by others. Those people who specialize become interdependent. That is one person depends upon the production of many other people to fulfuill his/her needs and wants. In turn those other people depend upon the purchases of others to maintain their jobs. The failure of some specialists to produce means that other people would need to go without certain needs or wants.

Another related and true fact is that the distributions of people, natural resources, and capital resources on the surface of the earth are not uniform. This fact leads to the comparative advantages and specialization of regions and to the

interdependence of different areas of nations and the world.

Research into learning is very clear on how to teach concepts: Define the concept and provide examples and nonexamples of the concept. Every community, state, and nation is capable of providing multiple examples of specialization, comparative advantages, and interdependence. Commercially prepared textbooks are not able to provide those local and state specific examples. The way to obtain those statistics and examples for a community or a state is to conduct surveys and to consult individual government publications. The remainder of this article provides government statistics specific to the state of Arkansas and provides outlines for surveying, organizing, interpreting, and evaluating data about the concepts of specialization, comparative advantage, and interdependence as the concepts relate to the lives of students and to the agriculture and industry of Arkansas and the U.S.A. It is suggested that all six of the detailed activities be taught in the order presented and in their entirety. The suggested extension activities can be used to reinforce or supplement learning.

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Knowledge objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and define the concepts of specialization, comparative advantage, and interdependence.
2. Students will be able to give examples of the concepts as they pertain to their own lives, the lives of Arkansans, the lives of Americans, and the lives of people in other nations.
3. Students will identify economic and social problems associated with specialization, comparative advantages, and interdependence.

Skill objectives:

1. Students will gather data through surveys, organize data, read and interpret charts and graphs.

2. Students will make predictive hypotheses.

3. Students will evaluate hypotheses and data sources.

Attitudinal objectives:

1. Students will have a positive attitude toward U.S. participation in international trade.

2. Students will have more interest in the lives of people with whom the U.S.A. trades.

FINDING FOREIGN MADE PRODUCTS IN YOUR HOME

Conduct a survey of your home. Be certain to ask your parents' permission and to replace items as you found them.

General Category	Item Name	Country of Origin
Clothing	1. 2. 3.	
Furniture & Appliances	1. 2. 3.	
Recreational Equipment	1. 2. 3.	
Food	1. 2. 3.	

Looking at the results of your own survey, answer the following questions:

1. From which two foreign nations has your family purchased the greatest number of goods?
2. Are these items available from American sources?
3. Why did your family purchase the foreign made items?
4. What do these items tell you about the skills of the workers in the nations listed on your survey?
5. Combine your results with those of your classmates. Which of the above questions would have different answers? Which would have the same answers?

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS AND MY FRIENDS

Ask your parents or neighbors to help you identify a person you personally know who fills one or more of the following criteria. Write the name of the person in the blank following the statement.

Whom do you know who:	Name:
1. has traveled to another nation?	_____
2. was born in another nation?	_____
3. has a passport?	_____
4. owns a foreign car?	_____
5. speaks another language?	_____
6. is a member of a club with branches in many nations?	_____
7. has contributed to an international charity (ie; UNICEF, CARE, or Red Cross)?	_____
8. has purchased a Christmas gift for someone, that was made in another nation?	_____
9. works for a multi-national corporation?	_____
10. has gone to a foreign movie?	_____
11. has worked in another nation or was stationed in a foreign country while in military service?	_____

THE ROLE OF ARKANSAS IN WORLD AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Teaching Procedures:

1. Distribute copies of the chart :ARKANSAS' RANK AMONG STATES and the QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF ARKANSAS IN WORLD AGRICULTURAL TRADE.
2. Have students individually or in pairs answer the questions.
3. Discuss the answers to the questions with the entire class.
4. Divide the class into small groups. Distribute copies of the problem: PROMOTING ARKANSAS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN OTHER NATIONS. Each group should work through the problem.
5. Have the groups share their solutions in a class discussion. Compare the criteria and the nations for commonalities and differences.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF ARKANSAS IN WORLD AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Refer to the chart ARKANSAS' RANK AMONG STATES to help you answer the following questions.

1. In which five agricultural commodities does Arkansas rank among the top exporting states?
2. Which of these commodities requires flat land and warm to hot growing seasons?
3. In addition to the climate and flat land what other advantages do Arkansas farmers have in the production of these crops that other farmers would not have?

Economists call these advantages comparative advantages. Comparative advantages make it possible to produce a product with less work and at less cost.

4. Arkansas farmers can grow a large variety of products. For some of the products Arkansas does not have as great a comparative advantage as some other location. Name a state or nation that would have a strong comparative advantage in growing corn, apples, bananas, and beef cattle.

5. Which nations ofthe world do you think purchased the agriculutral goods of Arkansas?

6. For which of the Arkansas products do you think the demand will most likely increase? Give a reason for your prediction.

7. How might each of the following statements from the periodical FOREIGN AGRICULTURE, August 1981 effect Arkansas?

A. "Egypt: A Growing Market for Poultry and Egg Products"

B. " China -- Rice Exports May Drop in 1981"

C. "Saudi Arabia now ranks among the top three poultry meat importers."

PROMOTING ARKANSAS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN OTHER NATIONS

Pretend you are an official of the A.I.D.C. (Arkansas Industrial Development Commission). Your goal is to increase the success or industries in Arkansas. Since agriculture is an important industry in Arkansas, you have decided to try to increase the sales of Arkansas produced agricultural products throughout the world. Yet, you are very much aware of the scarcity of time and money you can devote to this one task. You need to concentrate your resources on those nations in which you believe you will have the greatest success increasing sales and opening new markets.

Make a chart to help you decide on the best nations. In the left column list the criteira or characteristics of the nations that you think would be the most promising prospects. One criterion might be that the people like to eat rice. In the other columns list the names of possible nations. Make a check for each of the criteria which the nation fulfills, a minus for not meeting the criterion, and a question mark if you need to research this.

SAMPLE DECISION CHART

Characteristic	China	nation 2	nation 3	
like to eat rice	✓			

ARKANSAS' RANK AMONG STATES:
PRODUCTION OF CROPS AND LIVESTOCK, 1980

Commodity	Unit	Production	
		Rank	Thous. dollars
CROPS			
Corn for grain	Bu.	40	1,036
Cotton	Lb. Bale	6	444
Cottonseed	Ton	5	181
Oats	Bu.	24	2,079
Rice	Lb. Cwt.	1	52,615
Sorghum grain	Bu.	10	5,887
Soybeans, for beans	Bu.	8	69,600
Sweetpotatoes	Cwt.	13	36
Wheat, all	Bu.	19	31,160
HAY & SEEDS			
Hay, all	Ton	29	1,221
Lespedeza seed	Lb.	4	465
Tall fescue seed	Lb.	4	3,380
FRUITS & NUTS			
Apples, commercial	Lb.	35	5,000
Grapes	Ton	8	6.6
Peaches	Lb.	10	27,000
Pecans, all	Lb.	11	900
TRUCK CROPS			
Strawberries	Lb.	13	2,600
Tomatoes	Cwt.	13	241
Watermelons	Cwt.	15	80
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY			
Cattle & calves	Head	17	2,300
Milk	Lb.	34	745,000
Hogs & pigs	Head	20	720
Commercial broilers	No.	1	634,877
Eggs	No.	4	4,153,000
Farm chickens	No.	3	27,450
Turkeys, raised	No.	4	14,500
Honey	Lb.	34	1,472
Beeswax	Lb.	38	28

Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
Little Rock
Report Series 262

MAPPING THE FLOW OF ARKANSAS INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES AND PRODUCTS

Teaching Procedures:

Contact several industrial facilities. Ask them for a list of the nations to which they ship their finished products. On a world map locate the plant site and draw a straight line from the plant to each of the nations. This activity can make an attractive bulletin board. Use a paper world map and pins and different colored yarns.

Let us assume you requested information from Falcon Products, Inc. at Lewisville, Arkansas. Falcon has received recognition for its efforts in international trade. The Falcon company currently produces wood products such as the booths and chairs used in restaurants, airports, hotels, homes, and offices. In the past year they have been involved with sales to Ecquador, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Mexico, France, England, Iran, Puerto Rico, China, and Canada.

A discussion should center on the map(s) and the following questions:

1. How widely distributed throughout the world are Arkansas manufactured goods?
2. Is there a concentration of trade to one or two areas of the world?
3. Are there areas of the world where Arkansas manufacturers don't sell products? Why might this be the case?
4. How important to the Arkansas economy is the developing world?
5. How important to the Arkansas economy is the highly industrialized portion of the world?
6. Where should Arkansas industries seek new markets? What might be some of the difficulties in obtaining these markets?

Mapping Lesson Extension Idea:

Another question to ask industries which illustrates interdependence and comparative advantage pertains to the sources of raw materials and capital goods used in the plants. "From what nations or states do the raw materials and machinery used in your plants come?" A mapping exercise connecting the sources of raw materials and machinery to the plant location illustrates that some plants are unable to function if limited to using local resources.

THE U.S.A. A WORLD LEADER IN IMPORTING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

Teaching Procedures:

1. Distribute copies of the charts and graph from the March 1981 issue of FOREIGN AGRICULTURE published by the U.S. government.
2. Distrubute a copy of: QUESTIONS TO HELP INTERPRET THE IMPORT DATA. Have the students answer these questions.
3. Have a class discussion using the questions as a starting point.

QUESTIONS TO HELP INTERPRET THE IMPORT DATA

Use the data on the U.S.A. Agricultural Imports to help you answer these questions.

1. Which regions of the world make up the "Developing World"?
2. Do the percentages add to 67%?
3. Examine the chart of the Top Ten Suppliers. Eight of the nations are in the developing world. Which two are not a part of the developing world?
4. Which nations are in Asia, in Central America, and in South America?
5. Using the data on the charts of imports, list the products you think each nation sends to the U.S.A. (Check your predictions in an almanac.)
6. After examining chart 2, write a definition for complementary imports.
7. How might the lives of Americans be different if we didn't import coffee and tea?
8. What would you miss the most if cocoa were not imported?
9. From which nations do you think the largest amounts of supplementary imports come?

10. Since sugar cane grows in the tropics, why isn't sugar on the list of complementary imports?

11. Which citizens or groups would you expect would purchase the supplementary imports of dairy products, wine, and meat?

12. What fruits and vegetables grown in the U.S.A. would you also expect would be imported into the U.S.A.? Why?

Lesson Extension Ideas:

This lesson may be extended by doing one or both of the following research projects.

A LOCAL SURVEY RESEARCH PROJECT

Many imported agricultural products are found in the manufactured food products we buy. Read ingredient lists of some prepared foods at home or in a grocery store. In what food have you eaten palm oil? Palm oil has been an export from Africa for almost 400 years. Which local fast food facilities use imported beef? Wher in your community could you buy imported hams and cheese? Wines and beer? What are the cost differences between domestic and imported products? Are their any restaurants in your community that must import certain foods to maintain their menu? What foods would you find in an oriental food store that you would not find in a typical American grocery store? Owners of restaurants or special food stores might make interesting guest speakers for classes.

LIBRARY RESEARCH

Divide the class into groups or research teams. Select one of the agricultural imports and research about the growth and production of the crop. In the report include the answers to the following questions:

1. Is the product produced on small farms or plantations?

2. Who owns the farms or plantations?

3. Do entire families work on the production of the crop? How is the labor divided?

4. What kinds of labor are used in the production process?

5. What are the chances of increasing the production of the product?

6. What are the major problems that might cause a sharp decrease in production?

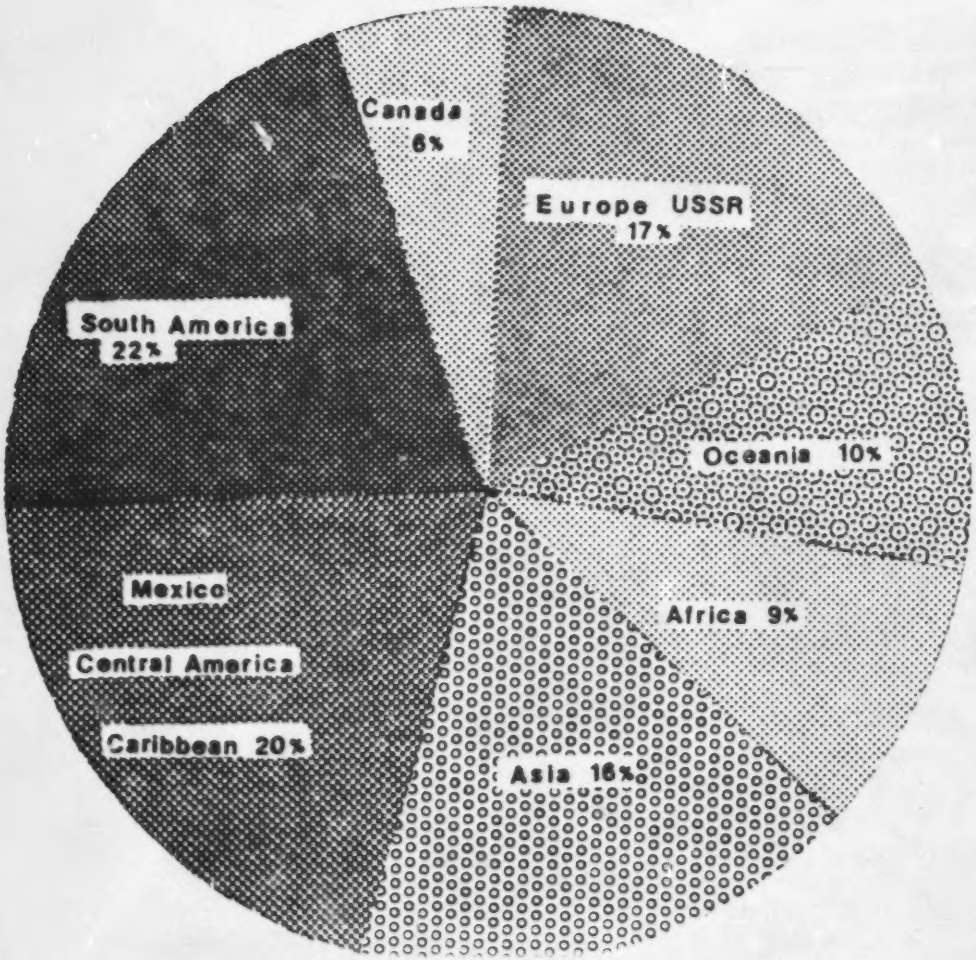
7. In what ways do individuals in the producing nations use or prepare the product for their own consumption?

8. What other nations purchase the product?

9. How might the lives of people in other nations be changed if the U.S.A. quit importing this product?

10. How would American lives be different if this product were no longer imported?

Developing World Supplies Two-Thirds of U.S. Imports



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Agricultural Import Data, 1980

TOP TEN SUPPLIERS of AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS TO the UNITED STATES, FISCAL 1980 (In Million Dollars)

Country	Value
Brazil	1,746
Mexico	1,197
Australia	1,071
Colombia	1,061
Canada	1,022
Indonesia	747
New Zealand	609
Philippines	584
Dominican Republic	506
Guatemala	446

LEADING COMPLEMENTARY IMPORTS, FISCAL 1980 (In Million Dollars)

Commodity	Value
Coffee	4,493
Cocoa	968
Rubber and allied gums	834
Bananas	430
Spices	140
Tea	133
Total	7,351

Source of data: FOREIGN AGRICULTURE, March 1981.

After students have become aware of their personal, state,and national economic interdependence , they may want to know more about other nations and their people. The typical American student knows very little about the nations and people of Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. Once formal schooling is completed most Americans get their current information about the world from TV news or the newspaper. Television also influences student knowledge of the world. Several research reports state that students credit television as an important source of information. A survey of the nations mentioned in the evening news and the newspaper over a one week period of time may give students some reasons why they know little about some areas of the world.

SURVEYING REFERENCES TO OTHER N IONS FROM THE POPULAR MEDIA

Teaching Procedures:

1. Divide the class into groups which will view the same TV station and read the same newspaper.
2. Students gather the data using uniform procedures. Students should keep a list of the names of other nations or the cities in other nations mentioned in the newscasts. Write a one or two line summary of the story. Cut out the article from the paper about other nations and write a short summary.
3. Organize the data on a chart. List the nations or regions of the world in the first column. In additional columns have the students classify the articles into such groups as those about governments, industry,people, etc. Have the students list their feelings about the content of the articles. Are the students pleased, hopeful, worried, or fearful about what they read?
4. Using the group's chart the students should answers the discussion questions.

5. Individual groups should present their findings to the class and compare their results. Should individual charts not be large enough to see, a summary of the total number of articles for each region could be listed on the board and used as a basis of comparison. What conclusions can the students make about the differences in reporting about other nations by TV, and the newspapers? Why might some stations and papers devote more time and space than other stations?

Student Materials:

_____ TV News and _____ Newspaper _____ (dates)

NATIONS OR REGION	NUMBER OF STORIES	FEELINGS ABOUT ARTICLES	NUMBER ABOUT GOVERNMENT	NUMBER ABOUT PEOPLE'S LIVES
AFRICA				
CHINA				
USSR				
TOTALS				

After you have completed your chart, the group should answer the following questions which you will later discuss with the entire class.

1. About which areas of the world would you have learned most this week?
2. About which areas of the world would you have learned nothing this past week?
3. Do you think your survey is typical of most weeks? Why or why not?
4. Did you learn much about the nations that trade with Arkansas?
5. Did any of the articles tell of a need or want in another area of the world that could be a source of potential trade for Arkansas?

6. Did any of the articles tell us anything that might influence the lives of people who live in Arkansas?

7. Do you think you will be well enough informed about the world by listening to the TV news and reading the newspaper?

8. If you think you will need to be better informed, what can you do to obtain the information?

9. What might be something you could do to encourage the popular media to provide more information about a greater variety of nations and people?

10. If the popular media doesn't change its patterns of representation, Where can you obtain current, accurate information about areas of the world neglected by the popular media?

11. After you compare the findings of your group with the other groups' findings, can you identify a TV station and a newspaper that seems to devote more time and space to information about other nations and people? Why might this be the case?